RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

DECEMBER, 1989 - JANUARY, 1990 *232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493*

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

SEASON'S GREETINGS

MEETING MINUTES

If success is measured in numbers, then RNA has had a banner year. Our last three meetings have been well attended, and our list of guest speakers most impressive.

The November meeting was a prime example when we presented Marilyn Roman, newly-elected Council President and long-time Freeholder. Mrs. Roman is an articulate speaker and was well prepared. After a presentation of her background in general and in politics, Marilyn then filled us in on the reorganization that is taking place in the Council and the stories behind some recent negative headlines.

While she admits that she does not have all the answers up her sleeve, Ms. Roman is doing her best to look at every aspect of the concerns of the citizens so that solutions can be found that will benefit the majority of people.

We had an update on many items of interest to our membership i.e., the water tank at the reservoir, our drive for aid to the needy; the results of our annual Harvest Party for Harborview residents; the Heights Coalition of Neighborhood associations; garbage receptacles for Palisade Avenue; our annual Christmas carolling, etc.

After the meeting, we enjoyed refreshments provided by Gert Bogdan, Valerie Rea, Rose Scalzo and Marie Tuzzo. The monthly 50/50 was won by Ms. Roman but she declined her prize and asked that we pick another winner. Cosmo Sasso then won and asked that his winnings be donated to the RNA treasury.

These are just some of the nice people that you will meet through your neighborhood association. Why not give us a try. Join us for our next meeting Tuesday, December 12th 7:30 p.m. at the Harborview Health Care Center.

Maria Tuzzo, Secretary

HARBORVIEW HARVEST PARTY

Our annual Harvest Party for our friends at the Harborview Health Care Facility was held on November 10th. This year we missed the children from No. 8 school because they were on vacation. We did, however, have the wonderful music of Frank Frega accompanied by Mike of Harborview. This nifty duo was terrific!

Maria Tuzzo started off the festivities and then began a medley of songs . All of this on her lunch hour. Maria had to go back to work and she left thinking that the party was slow moving. Not at all!.. Nobody joined in her singing because with her good voice, she was pure entertainment and nobody wanted to spoil it.

Music was the theme of the day and everyone really got into the spirit of the party. Marie Tuzzo (Maria's Mom) and Rose Scalzo were definite dancers and Gert Bogdan, Kay Gromp and Jack Rea sang. Jack also did a mean dance with his partner thoroughly enjoying being danced around in her wheelchair. Bea Higgins was the hostess with the mostest running around making sure everyone had plenty to eat and drink. The day ended with Charlie Long, one of the residents singing "It's Only An Irishman's Dream". Dolly Quinton made a terrific rice pudding which everyone raved over. It was a sugarless dessert and everyone wanted the recipe. (It is printed in this month's newsletter for your enjoyment.)

The party was a huge success because of the combined efforts of our group and those of the staff of Harborview. Led by Joan Marie Benedetto, they helped serve the food, sing along and encourage the residents to enjoy themselves. I know we all did.

Special thanks to those who donated items to make this party a success.

COMING EVENTS

RNA MEETINGS: 7:30 PM AT THE HARBORVIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER

A) TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1989: "HOLIDAY PARTY"

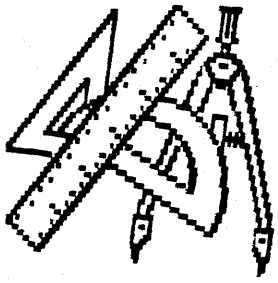
B) TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 1990: GUEST SPEAKER: MICHEAL MARTUCCI, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

COMMUNITY UPDATES

A) HEIGHTS RESERVOIRS: The Committee for the Future of the Reservoirs met with Mayor McCann, HED Director Mark Munley and project manager Cathy Cardinale on November 11th. The Committee brought the new officials up to date with their work in the community. The officials, on their part, informed the citizens that they were interested only in developing the Reservoirs in accordance with the wishes of the community. The ideas they had in mind included an R-2 residential community in Reservoir 3 and a new fire and police station, along with the new water tank, in Reservoir 2. Both Munley and McCann did not agree with the idea of creating open space or recreational parks in Reservoir 3 because it would cost too much money and there would be no additional taxable properties. The Committee and the officials did agree on the concept of hiring an architect to draw up plans for the alternatives that are being considered by the City and the community.

B) HEIGHTS COALITION: On October 30th, nine neighborhood, block and community organizations met for the second time to set up a coalition of Heights groups. The guest speakers were John Lester of DCNA and Mike Bell, one of the original members of DCNA. They both were very informative about the advantages and possible pitfalls of this type of group. Bell compared the group to a "think tank" of community interests for the local councilmen and the City in general. Lester stated that the coalition gives the community more glout with the City in terms of access and getting solutions to its problems. In the end, both speakers encouraged the gathering of about 15 people to go ahead and create the Heights coalition. After that, a Bylaws Committee was appointed and reported its proposals for rules and boundaries at the Nov. 27th meeting. The next meeting of the Coalition will be on Jan. 22, 1990.

C) WATERFRONT TRANSPORTATION: On November 9th there were two public scoping meetings set up by the Hudson River Waterfront Transportation Alternative Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement Project in the J. C. City Hall. Many speakers from Hoboken and Jersey City spoke out and informed the committee that they want a non-polluting, environmentally safe transportation system for the waterfront. They were opposed to additional bus and car roads and favored a light rail system.(The committee was also requested to consider a plan developed by Ted Conrad to use existing Conrail lines and diesel trains.) The citizens also spoke out against a transportation system that would only serve the newer waterfront communities and the tunnel traffic to New York City and adversely effect the older, inner-city communities and historical districts. On November 21th, RNA attended an Advisory Committee meeting for the Waterfront plan. At this meeting, a questionnaire which included all the public comments received at the public and scoping meetings was discussed. In December, members of the Advisory Committee will be sent this questionaire and asked to fill it out.The responses will then be used to formulate the final results of the environmental report and the ultimate form that this transportation plan takes.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

As we go to press, a number of construction projects are underway in the Ogden and Palisade Avenue neighborhoods. Two of these, 253 and 285 Ogden, are specifically involved in the demolition of condemned structures. There are at least two other projects involving renovations- one at 255 Ogden Avenue and another at 403 Palisade Avenue.

The two Ogden Avenue demolition projects are both residential. At 253 Ogden Avenue, the location of a severe fire about two years ago, the house and foundation have finally been removed by the Incinerator Authority(JCIA) as of October 13th; however the actual site remains in an unsafe and unsecured state. RNA has contacted the JCIA and has been reassured that the work will be completed within a few months. (What RNA expects to occur is that the land will be leveled, a cyclone fence will be installed across the lot and a new cement sidewalk will be built.)

Progress at 285 Ogden Avenue was also proceeding at a snail's pace. After nearly eight weeks of work, only one-half of the structure had been removed: leaving the surrounding area in a totally unsafe state with building debris hanging over the sidewalk. Finally on Nov. 28th, the building was knocked down by the JCIA. (The explanation RNA is getting about the speed of these two projects from the JCIA, is that the demolition crew is being rotated between several other demolition sites and therefore cannot concentrate on one at a time.)

Also on Ogden Avenue, at 255, there is a renovation of the three story frame house. This structure was damaged substantially in the same fire that destroyed 253 Ogden. RNA is currently attempting to contact the new owners to obtain more information about the project. At present, the building was aluminium sided, so that interior work can begin over the winter.

The property at 403 Palisade Avenue (southwest corner of Palisade And Hutton) is undergoing a commercial renovation. RNA has been informed that a Billiard hall is being planned for the ground floor space in the building. RNA has contacted one of the business partners, John Folk, and has proposed a meeting with him and our P & D Committee. Mr. Folk expressed an interest in a meeting of this type. The proposed use of this space as a "pool hall" has stirred substantial concern among residents in the neighborhood. RNA encourages any neighbors to bring their questions and comments about this project to our December 12th meeting.

CLEAN UP YOUR OWN MESS

(In RNA's continuing campaign to clean up our neighborhood, we reprint two letters concerning the problem. One is from the J.C. Reporter of October 22nd, written by our Municipal Prosecutor, Harold O'Grady. The second letter, from our friend, Tom Killeen of the Incinerator Authority, was given to all residents and commercial owners on Palisade Avenue. After the two letters, we are also including excerpts of the J.C. Clean Communities brochure which was given out with Killeen's letter.)

LETTER ONE:

Dear citizen:

The increasing litter problem in Jersey City requires vigorous enforcement on the part of sanitary inspectors, police officers, incinerator inspectors and others, including private citizens. Chapter 22 of the Jersey City Municipal Code imposes a duty not to litter upon owners, tenants, motor vehicle operators and passengers, pedestrians, and merchants. Among the practices prohibited by law are the following:

accumulating refuse on sidewalks; accumulating refuse on vacant lots; maintaining growth of weeds higher than 6 inches; placing refuse out for collection in unsealed containers; improper storage of refuse containers; placement of refuse containers for collection prior to 7 p.m. on the day before collection; throwing garbage out windows or down dumbwaiters or storage of same on stairways, fire escapes or in hallways; placement of hazardous refuse out for collection; placement of demolition containers without a permit; placement of refuse in dumpsters higher than 4 inches from the top edge; dumping or depositing any refuse, rubbish or other materials on any land in Jersey City; permitting illegal dumping on private property; burning refuse within city limits; sweeping litter into any gutter; throwing litter from a motor vehicle; littering sidewalks or parks.

The problem is sufficiently serious that violations are punishable by a minimum fine of $100 to a maximum of $1,000 and/or 90 days in jail. Repeat offenders will be assessed fines in excess of $100.

In the Jersey City Housing Court, summons dealing with litter and refuse exceed 500 per month. Increased enforcement and the minimum $100 fine should make citizens think of the consequences of littering and dumping in Jersey City

Take pride in Jersey City. Dispose of refuse properly.

Harold V. O'Grady, Municipal Prosecutor

LETTER TWO:

Dear Resident/Proprietor:

This letter will serve as a reminder to those who are unfamiliar with the Litter Ordinance in Jersey City, and unfamiliar with the Pride which most of us take in our City.

The Jersey City Incinerator Authority is very serious about providing a better quality of life for all residents. To achieve this goal, we provide essential city services such as: recycling, garbage collection and street sweeping, and many more.'

However, we cannot do it alone. Residents and store owners have certain responsibilities and duties. You must insure that recycling and garbage are placed out properly, so that debris does not accumulate on the sidewalk and you must keep the sidewalk in front of your property free of litter.

We are doing our part!....Now it is time to do yours. Please interpret this letter in the spirit that it is intended, which is a cleaner environment for everyone. I am enclosing brochures with specific regulations and how they apply to you.

Environmental Inspectors will follow up this letter to see that all regulations are being complied with. Thank you for your attention and cooperation in this matter.

Thomas J. Killeen, Recycling Director

YOUR LITTER RESPONSIBILITY UNDER THE LAW

A. RESIDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1) NO PERSON SHALL SWEEP INTO OR DEPOSIT IN ANY GUTTER, LITTER OR DEBRIS. ALL SWEEPINGS MUST BE DEPOSITED INTO A RECEPTACLE FOR PROPER DISPOSAL.

2) NO PERSON WHILE A DRIVER OR PASSENGER IN A VEHICLE SHALL THROW OR DEPOSIT LITTER UPON ANY STREET OR OTHER PUBLIC PLACE.

3) NO PERSON SHALL THROW OR DEPOSIT LITTER IN ANY PARK EXCEPT IN A LITTER RECEPTACLE.

4) PERSONS OWNING OR OCCUPYING PROPERTY SHALL KEEP THE SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF THEIR PREMISES FREE OF LITTER.

B. COMMERCIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1) MERCHANTS, OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS MUST SWEEP SIDEWALK AND REMOVE LITTER DAILY. DEBRIS SHOULD BE COLLECTED AND STORED IN A RECEPTACLE. NO LITTER IS TO BE PLACED IN THE GUTTERS.

2) MERCHANTS ON CENTRAL AND WESTSIDE AVENUES MUST SWEEP SIDEWALKS AND REMOVE LITTER ONE HALF HOUR AFTER OPENING AND ONE HALF HOUR BEFORE CLOSING EACH BUSINESS DAY.

3) OWNERS OF THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A LITTER RECEPTACLE FOR THEIR PATRONS OUTSIDE OF THEIR ESTABLISHMENTS:

a) STREET VENDORS
b) SELF-SERVICE REFRESHMENT AREAS
c) CONSTRUCTION SITES
d) FAST FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS
e) SERVICE STATIONS

C. EACH OWNER OF A DOG SHALL IMMEDIATELY REMOVE AND DISPOSE OF ANY FECES DEPOSITED BY SUCH DOG IN PUBLIC PLACES BY A SANITARY METHOD.

D. ILLEGAL DUMPING

1) COSTS TAXPAYERS ANNUALLY THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS FOR CLEAN UP

2) CONTRIBUTES TO AN UNSAFE AND UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

3) GIVES A BAD IMPRESSION OF OUR CITY-JERSEY CITY

4) WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP PREVENT IT? REPORT IT BY CALLING THE OFFICES OF J.C.I.A. AT 432-4645 AND GIVING THE LOCATION OF THE INCIDENT AND THE PLATE NUMBER OF THE VEHICLE. AN ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTOR WILL BE DISPATCHED TO THE AREA. **REMINDER** YOU ARE ENTITLED TO 25% OF THE FINE, IF THERE IS A CONVICTION.

(POSTSCRIPT: At our last meeting, ROBERT IEZZI, of Craft Industries, made a proposal to the group which would help in the clean-up of Palisade Avenue. He suggested that RNA help the Palisade businessmen ask the City to put Trash Receptacles all along the Avenue from Cuneo Place to Bowers Street. He said that Tom Killeen of JCIA was very supportive of the idea and volunteered to donate the receptacles for this pilot project. Anne Hart of RNA will work with Mr. Iezzi and Mr. Killeen to bring this long overdue idea to reality.)

THE following two articles are reprinted from the Office of Advocacy for the Handicapped Bulletin:

A) PROTECTION LAW ON CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION:

The "Senior Citizen & Disabled Protected Tenancy Act", for those senior citizens and disabled who qualify, states that there can be no eviction for 40 years on the grounds that a building is being converted to a condo or cooperative.

Senior citizens must meet certain eligibility requirements, including: a) that they must have an income no higher than three times the county per capital income (This figure will change each year. Income means the total income from all sources during the last calendar year for everybody who lives in the apartment at the time the tenant applies for protection), b) they must have resided in the apartment for two years by the date the master deed for the condo or the deed for cooperative if filed with the county, c).they are 62 years of age or older, and d) that their building contains at least 5 rental units.'

The Law also protects a disabled person who is totally and permanently unable to work because of a physical or mental impairment or blindness. All of the above requirements must be met except age.

Before a landlord converts a building, an application form will be sent by the municipality or administering agency to every tenant in the building. The tenant must fill out the form and send or hand deliver it to the town or administrative agency.

If the building received approval to convert from the Department of Community Affairs before July, 1981, the tenant must go to court to apply for protection.

B) RESPITE CARE PROGRAM:

The Visiting Homemaker Service of Hudson County can help families with dependent members of special needs. Whether for a morning, afternoon, or once in awhile, your special person will be looked after by a trained homemaker health aide.

Respite services can include companions or sitters homemaker/personal care aides, short term in patient care in a licensed facility, and emergency care when the caregiver is unexpectedly unable.

All families or individuals providing unpaid basic daily care at home to an impaired adult over age 18 are eligible for services. In order to participate, the impaired individuals income must meet certain financial eligibility requirements. Free service may be discussed by phone or in person. Co-payments on a sliding fee scale are required for those whose monthly income is over the federal poverty guidelines. The services provided are limited by the program guidelines so that the visiting homemaker service can serve as many needy families as possible.

For further information, please contact Visiting Homemakers Service at 656-6001.

CONRAD'S CORNER

Between 1982 and the present time the United States has consumed $800 billion in products we did not pay for. We have been living way beyond our means for products we did not produce. In order to bring consumption back into balance with revenue, consumption will have to be cut 10% a year for each American family for decades to come. And now with the recent stock market crash it will mean people will have to save still more and consume less, all of which should put the brakes on over development in our cities with a drop in our standard of living.

At the present rate of development in our metropolitan area the population growth in a thirty-five mile area around Manhattan will be 200 million, five million short of the entire population of Canada. It will become too expensive to build a 2 1/2 billion dollar transit system for the area. We'll have to chase 5 million people out to reduce density in order to survive. Most importantly government and business will have to take off their blinders and recognize the seriousness of over development with restraint. It will take firm and swift measures to stop it.

Frank Lloyd Wright with his broad acres planning scheme conceived a spread out low rise city with high risers half a mile apart to allow for a mobile open space to be served by the automobile. High rise planning without a real plan can no longer be tolerated in a modern city of the future by greedy developers.

A broad-acres planned city of the future will ward off a depression of the future if we don't keep over building our unplanned cities, no amount of mass transit will be able to serve it efficiently at a low cost.
(November 8, 1989)

(The following article is reprinted from the JERSEY SIERRAN, which is the newsletter for The Sierra Club of N.J.)

"Diesel Emissions Seen as Missing Piece in New Jersey's Air Pollution Puzzle"

During a hot summer day driving to the Jersey shore, you unexpectedly find yourself trailing one of a caravan of casino buses heading to Atlantic City. The bus accelerates, leaving behind a haze of black soot and smoke. Suddenly you become nauseous and dizzy, maybe accompanied by coughing and wheezing, or simply a feeling of fatigue. Pulling off to the shoulder of the road, the sick feeling gradually subsides.

Perhaps you're jogging along a main thoroughfare in your home town when a large tractor-trailer roars by spewing out a thick black cloud that hangs over the street, slowly settling on the trees and shrubs lining the sidewalk. "There ought to be a law," you mutter to yourself as you cough on the polluted air. Eying a young mother pushing the baby carriage, you wonder what effect the truck's exhausts have on the infant (or the children playing in the park). With all the talk lately about cleaning up the air, surely someone is doing something about emissions from trucks and buses..aren't they?

Despite our state's excellent record on regulating sources of air pollution, one of the missing pieces in New Jersey's complicated plan to clean our air remains diesel emissions from trucks and buses. Increased truck/bus traffic in the last several years has heightened concern over the impact on air quality. At present, large diesel trucks are required to conduct a self-inspected smoke opacity test once a year. Buses, on the other hand, are inspected twice annually for emissions by the Department of Transportation and the owner. New Jersey Transit buses are exempt from the inspections by NJDOT and, instead, are inspected by NJ Transit semi-annually.

No form of centralized inspection programs is required for diesel-powered trucks and buses as is presently mandated for automobiles. Legislation designed to correct this inadequacy was introduced last year by Senator Thomas H. Paterniti, Democrat from Edison. Paterniti's bill was so watered down after Senate committee review that state environmentalists had a tough time supporting it.

For years, scientists neglected to recognize the health implications from diesel fuel emissions. Only recently, studies have begun to identify the constituents of diesel exhaust, namely carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and fine particulates, as a serious threat to human health.

The nitrogen oxides are a group of gaseous compounds involved in the formation of acid rain and ground-level ozone. In addition, nitrous oxide absorbs heat in the atmosphere, contributing to the Greenhouse Effect. Nitrogen dioxide is a toxic gas that, at lower concentrations, causes respiratory illnesses. Though technically not an air pollutant, carbon dioxide plays a major role in the Greenhouse Effect. Current levels of CO2 present in the atmosphere are theorized to be 25 percent higher than present before the Industrial Revolution.

By far, the biggest unknown and possibly the greatest threat to human health is from particulate emissions. Particulates, especially those with a diameter of less than 20 microns, easily penetrate deep into the lungs, where natural body defenses are unable to expel them. A micron is a unit of measurement that is one-millionth of a meter. Larger particles usually settle out of the air quickly or, if they are inhaled, are removed from the respiratory passageways by coughing or sneezing. Various toxic compounds associated with diesel combustion adhere to the particulates, providing a dangerous exposure pathway into the human body. Many of these substances, such as lead, benzene, cadmium, and formaldehyde are know to cause cancer and diverse pulmonary diseases.

One of the problems preventing a true account of the impact from particulates is monitoring. New Jersey has an extensive Air Monitoring Network that gathers information on various parameters of air quality. Twenty-four hour particulate samples are collected every sixth day at 45 locations throughout the state. However, most of the monitors are situated on roof tops in an effort to determine the overall quality of the air. This does not reflect the toxic and carcinogenic contaminants that pedestrians and motorists are forced to breathe. The state should investigate placing monitors at the Personal Breathing Zone Level.

Another health concern of the scientific community is the increasing sensitization of people to a wide variety of chemicals, many of them products of diesel combustion. According to a report by Dr. Rebecca Bascom, Director, University of Maryland Environmental Research Facility, to the State Department of the Environment, the "chemical hypersensitivity syndrome' (CHS) is an acquired disorder, characterized by fatigue, headaches, mucous membrane irritation, intestinal disturbances, muscle and joint pains, feelings of irritability or depression, and difficulties with concentration, comprehension and memory. These symptoms can be triggered by exposures to mixtures of volatile organics.

Benzene, a toxic constituent of diesel exhaust, was investigated as part of a five year study conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and known as a TEAM Study (Total Exposure Assessment Methodology). According to Linda Stansfield, Program Consultant for the American Lung Association, one of the most important discoveries from the TEAM Study was that New Jersey citizens were exposed to the highest levels of benzene while commuting to and from their jobs along the traffic corridors, higher than people exposed during work in the chemical manufacturing centers of Bayonne and Elizabeth. The vast majority of this exposure undoubtedly is the result of motor vehicle exhausts.

Based on the recent flurry of clean air legislation in Washington, D.C., concerns about the human health and environmental implications of diesel emissions are not being addressed. Several of the legislative bills are mandating the use of alternative fuels.

Formaldehyde, the smallest and most immunogenic (reactive) compound causing sensitization, is a significant combustion by-product of several alternative fuels. Widespread utilization of methanol, for example, could exacerbate the plight of

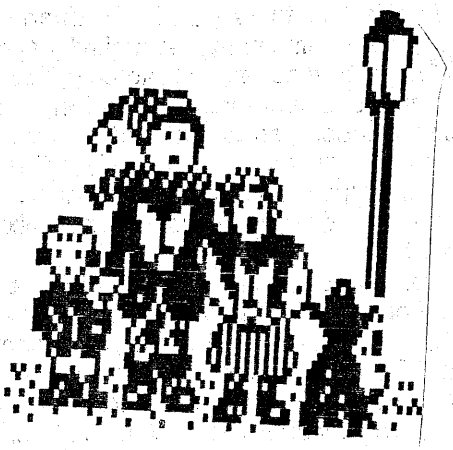
the population's reported 15% CHS sufferers.

President Bush's clean air plan, submitted to Congress this past July, calls for the diesel bus particulate standard to be more than doubled from the existing 1991 standards of 0.1 grams to 0.25 grams. Weakening of the current laws must be fought at every turn.

So, where does that leave the average New Jersey citizen who must endure the contaminated diesel exhausts prevalent on our streets and highways? Our state does have regulations that govern emissions...the problem is with enforcement! Most of the time, the regulations are being enforced by the truck and bus owners conducting their own inspections. (When is the last time you inspected your car? Of course, it passed with flying colors.) Obviously, the system is not working.

You can help the effort to curtail air pollution from smoky trucks and buses (as well as automobiles) by calling the N. J. Department of Environmental Protection at 609-530-4035. All reports will be followed up by the NJDEP staff. The Department will require the license plate number of the vehicles, date, time, road or street name, nearest cross street and the direction the smoky vehicle was traveling.

Next time you find yourself saying "there ought to be a law", remember it's up to you to enforce it. Report the truck or bus that just left you in a cloud of smoke and do your part in cleaning up New Jersey's air.



COME JOIN RNA THIS YEAR:

CHRISTMAS CAROLLING

This year our night of carolling will be on December 17th. We will meet at the Gazebo in Riverview Park at 6:30 p.m. and then proceed down Ogden Avenue to Ferry Street. We would like to add to our group and ask that you join us. We are a group of various ages from 70's to 4 (and this is his third year). You don't have to have a good voice (most of us don't) but it is fun and a nice way to share some Christmas joy among your neighbors. So come one and all to lend your voice to add to this festive season.

FOOD & TOY DRIVE

THE FOOD & TOY DRIVE is moving a little slowly. We have made arrangements for our donations to be picked up by the Salvation Army on Thursday, December 14th so if you haven't made a donation of food or toys yet, you still have time. Please bring your contributions to the next general meeting on December 12th or call 659-2245. after 6 p.m. for further information. Also, we are accepting cash donations and will spend the money as indicated by the donor. Please be generous to those in need.

Volunteers Needed

[The Salvation Army is always looking for volunteers. If you have some time to spare and have considered doing some volunteer work, you may want to look into this. The Army can use people to fill food baskets for distribution; to hand out toys to needy children; to collect donations and in many other capacities. If you are interested, call Mrs. Cheng at 435-7355 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.]

CHRISTMAS OF YESTERYEAR

Here's a glimpse of yesterday's Christmas, a collection of yuletide lore both practical and farfetched.

During the 1400's wrestling and cockfighting were popular Christmastime amusements.

Dances were held in country churches after the Christmas service in Northern England until the mid-17th century.

Spaniards exploring Mexico found that the Mexican Indians celebrated the December solstice (low point of the sun) every year.

Until 1681, the Puritans had a law requiring men to work on Christmas Day, and forbidding any kind of celebration. Opposition to Christmas merriment and feasting softened over the next century, though, as people became less touchy about religious dominations by other countries, and as immigrants, with their own colorful customs, mixed with other citizens. Christmas festivity was widespread in Virginia by 1746 once the difficulties of initial settlement were over.

During the 1800's, many Pennsylvanians celebrated Second Christmas - the day after Christmas, a time for visiting, games of chance, parades in which people dressed in outlandish clothes and perhaps a trip

to the city. It was on this day that many farm folks sat for their photographs.

The Yule Log, according to custom, should burn all night to bring good luck for the year. The large log was often decorated with ribbons and paper flowers and many families kept a remnant of the last Yule Log in the house all year, believing it would protect them from lightning.

The ashes from the Yule Log were often buried under fruit trees to increase their yield.

Wassailing the apple tree is a colorful old Christmas Eve tradition. The men go out with cider to encircle and toast the best-bearing tree. Meanwhile, the women bolt the doors and when the men return they are not allowed in until one of them correctly guesses which unusual food the women have chosen to cook for the meal that follows. Here's the toast if you want to try it just for fun:

Here's to thee, old apple tree,
Whence may'st thou bud, and whence may'st thou bloom
And whence may'st thou bear apples anow!
Hats full! Caps full!
Bushel — bushel — sacks full!
And my pockets full too! Huzza!

When kissing under the mistletoe, the man plucks a berry from the plant for each kiss. When the berries are gone, that's the end of the kissing privilege.

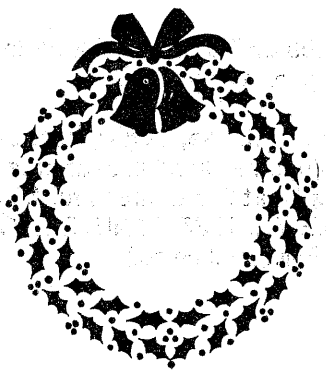
"Don't forget the poor," a recurring newspaper theme during the 18th and early 19th centuries, reflected the custom of providing for the less fortunate at holiday time.

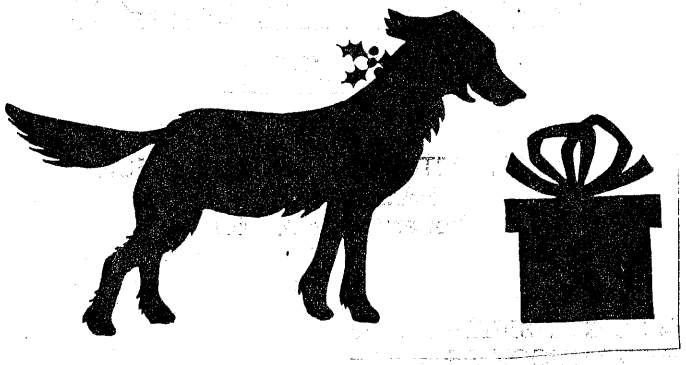
Many 18th century families would put bread outdoors on Christmas Eve so that dew would fall on it. In the morning, each member of the family would be given a piece of the dewy bread to prevent fevers all year long. farmers would often put hay out to gather this dew for their animals.

Folklore has it that the number of snowstorms for the winter can be foretold by counting the number of days from the first snowfall of the season until Christmas.

Someday, you know, people will refer to our time as the good old days. What will they miss? What will they wish for? Eagles, bluebirds, good air, old apple varieties, real wool, clean streams, prenuclear innocence?

There are no simple answers to the obvious next question--what can we do about it? Except to suggest appreciating anew the variety and freedom that we do have, teaching our children how interrelated all of us are here on earth, taking time to write to our congressman about issues that we feel are important, and perhaps giving Earth a Christmas present too--a contribution to our favorite environmental action group.





HOMEMADE GIFT SUGGESTIONS FOR THE KIDS

A) NAPKIN RINGS:

A set of napkin rings can be made from an empty waxed-paper tube. The tube is cut into 4, 6 or 8 sections depending upon the size of the tube and the number of rings desired. A good size for the rings is 1 1/2 or 2 inches.

Make a mixture of one part white glue and one part water. Dip short strips of tissue paper into the glue mixture and cover the pieces of tube with the strips. When thoroughly dried, the rings can be painted. The rings can be left a solid color or decorated in one of the following ways:

1. Cover painted rings with trims such as lace, ribbon or crocheted edging.
2. Pieces of foil can be cut into Christmas motifs (trees, angels, holly, Santa faces) and glued to the rings.
3. Rings can be painted a bright color and when dry, white paper doilies can be glued to them
4. Cutouts from gift wrap, greeting cards, etc. can be applied to the painted rings using a decoupage technique.

B) GIFT TAGS AND STICKERS:

Gift tags are one of the simplest things to make. Save old cards that have designs that you like. Use sharp scissors to cut out the design you particularly like into round or rectangular shapes. With a paper punch, make a hole in the tag. Thread string or yarn through the hole and tie tags on your package.

In addition to cutting tags with designs on them, you can also cut some tags from solid colors of the card. You can cut the solid color a little larger than the print and put them together also.

C) CLOTHESPIN ORNAMENTS:

Clothespins (no pinch type) can be painted and decorated with bits of trim, felt, yarn and fabric to make a variety of characters. Popsicle sticks can be used for arms. A piece of dowel rod and a bit of felt can become a soldier's hat. In addition to soldiers other figures could include Mr. and Mrs. Santa, elves, angels, shephards and wisemen.

FAVORITE HOLIDAY RECIPES

DAVE RAVITCH'S HONEY DOUGH FOR HAMENTASHEN
(or any fruit cake-pie)

4 CUPS OF SIFTED FLOUR
1/2 TEASPOON OF SALT
1 TEASPOON OF BAKING SODA
1/2 CUP OF SOFTENED BUTTER OR SHORTENING
4 EGGS
1 CUP HONEY

SIFT FLOUR, SALT AND BAKING POWDER INTO A BOWL .MAKE A WELL IN CENTER AND PLACE EGGS, HONEY AND SHORTENING IN IT. WORK IT UNTIL A DOUGH IS FORMED. THEN FORM IN SHAPE DESIRED. (I PUT LAYER ON BOTTOM OF BAKING DISH - 1/2 DOUGH AND REST ON TOP OF PEACHES, FRUIT, ETC. - ADDITIONAL FLAVORING AS DESIRED.)
BAKE AT 350 DEGREES UNTIL BROWNED, 20 -30 MINUTES. (FRUIT SHOULD BE COOKED ALREADY.)
USE HALF FOR SMALLER AMOUNTS.

Swedish Teacakes from Jackie

1 cup butter or margarine, softened
1/2 cup powdered sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 cups unsifted flour (not self-rising)
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup finely chopped or ground almonds or pecans (pecans preferred)

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. In mixing bowl, cream butter, powdered sugar and vanilla. Blend in flour, salt and nuts until dough holds together. Shape into 1 inch balls. Place 1 inch apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until set, but not brown. Cool slightly, roll in powdered sugar. Cool completely, roll again in powdered sugar.

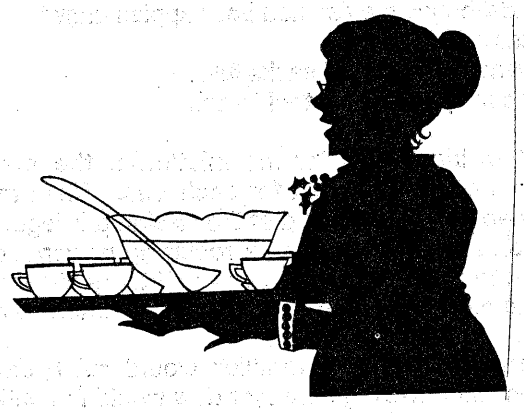
Makes 40-50 cookies.

DOLLY QUINTON'S FAMOUS SUGAR-FREE RICE PUDDING

1 Cup rice
1 1/2 Quarts of Milk
pinch of salt
1 teaspoons Vanilla
pinch of Nutmeg
6 to 8 packets of Sweet One

Combine all ingriedients and bring to a hard boil then lower and simmer for 2 to 2 1/2 hours. Let cool.
Then prepare 1 box of Sugar free Vanilla pudding cooked according to package directions. Add 3 or 4 packets of Equal.
Add vanilla pudding with rice pudding - cool

(For non-restricted diets: Add 1 Cup sugar to rice when cooking and eliminate Sweet One and Equal)



CARIN LEWIS' CHEESE CAKE

INGREDIENTS

3 EGGS (Well beaten)
2 EIGHT OUNCE PACKAGES OF CREAM CHEESE
I CUP SUGAR
3 CUPS SOUR CREAM
2 TEASPOONS VANILLA EXTRACT
1\4 TEASPOON LEMON EXTRACT (One quarter teasp)
PINCH OF SALT

GRAHAM CRACKER CRUST

I 3/4 CUP GRAHAM CRACKER CRUMBS
I/4 CUP FINE CHOPPED NUTS
I/2 TEASPOON CINNAMON
I/2 CUP BUTTER OR MARGARINE

Press Graham Crumbs on bottom and 2 I/2 inches on sides of a 9 inch spring form pan.

Combine eggs, cream cheese, sugar, salt and both extracts. Beat until smooth. Blend in sour cream. Pour into Graham crust. Bake at 375 degrees for 35 minutes. DO NOT BAKE MORE THAN 35 MINUTES. Cool-chill well for 4 to 5 hours. Filling will be soft.

DECORATE THE "TANK" CONTEST

PURPOSE OF CONTEST

The Jersey City Water Department is currently erecting a five million (5,000,000) gallon water storage tank to replace the ONE HUNDRED MILLION (100,000,000) GALLON backup capacity reservoir now available for Jersey City residents use in Reservoirs Number 2 and 3 located in the Jersey City Heights.

During the second hearing before the Jersey City Planning Board on August 22, 1989 when preliminary approval was granted for erection of the water tank (by then one third completed without approval or building permits) the Water Department Administrator offered to "let them" - the residents of this Jersey City neighborhood choose the color the tank will be painted. As part of these "neighbors" we are offering all the residents of Jersey City the opportunity to submit their ideas and suggestions on how the finished water tank should look.

All entries become the property of the Pershing Field Neighborhood Association. The winning selections of the judges are final. The winning entries will be offered to the President of the Jersey City Council for review.

The tank can be viewed in Reservoir 2 from Troy Street and Montrose Avenue or from Collard Street.

CONTEST ENDS: DECEMBER 31, 1989
(ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 12/31/89 AND MAILED TO 3 MONTROSE AVENUE, JERSEY CITY, N.J., 07307)

QUALIFICATIONS: OPEN TO ALL RESIDENTS OF JERSEY CITY. CONTEST WILL HAVE TWO CLASSES. ONE FOR CONTESTANTS UNDER SIXTEEN AND ONE FOR CONTESTANTS OVER SIXTEEN.

PRIZES:

1) MOST ARTISTIC:
Under Sixteen: $100.00 Saving Bond
Over Sixteen: $100.00 Saving Bond

2) MOST COMICAL
Under Sixteen: $100.00 Saving Bond
Over Sixteen: $100.00 Saving Bond

3) CONSOLATION PRIZE (By random drawing from all acceptable entries)
First Prize: $100.00 Saving Bond
Second Prize: $75.00 Saving Bond
Third Prize: $50.00 Saving Bond
(Saving bonds are U.S. Series EE)

OFFICAL ENTRIES FORMS CAN BE OBTAINED BY WRITING TO:

THE PERSHING FIELD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
c/o HERBERT C. HUELS
3 MONTROSE AVENUE
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY 07307

OR CALLING 653-7634

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THE STAFF WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL OUR NEIGHBORS, MEMBERS AND FRIENDS: MERRY CHRISTMAS, FELICE NAVIDAD, HAPPY CHANUKAH AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

(THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE RNA NEWSLETTER WILL BE IN FEBRUARY, 1990.)

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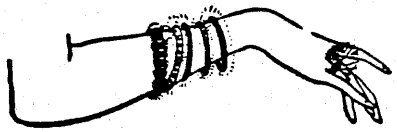

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